

A NEW ALOE FROM TANGANYIKA TERRITORY

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(With Plates XX, XXI)

Aloe venusta Reynolds. Species nova, affinis *A. macrosiphoni* Bak., sed ita differt: folia non nitida, gemmae bracteis magnis carnosulis imbricatis obtectae, pedicelli longiores, perianthium brevissime pubescens.

Planta acaulescens. *Folia* c. 20, dense rosulata, arcuato-adscendens, c. 50 cm. longa, 9 cm. lata, sensim attenuata; *supra* viridula, copiose maculata, basi plana, superne leviter canaliculata; *subtus* convexa, copiose maculata; marginibus dentibus 3 mm. longis, 8—10 mm. distantibus armata.

Inflorescentia paniculata, c. 10-ramosa, 1—1.20 met. alta. *Racemi* cylindrico-conici, densi, 15—20 cm. longi. *Bracteae* ovato-cuspidatae, carnosulae, c. 11 mm. longae, 10 mm. latae, 7—9-nervatae. *Pedicelli* 13 mm. longi. *Perianthium* coccineum, brevissime pubescens, cylindrico-trigonum, 32 mm. longum, circa ovarium 7 mm. diametro; *segmenta exteriora* per 12 mm. libera. *Antherae* 2—3 mm. exsertae. *Stigma* demum 3—4 mm. exserta. *Ovarium* 6 mm. longum, 3 mm. diametro. (Plates XX, XXI.)

HABITAT: Tanganyika Territory, Western Province, on rocks 71 miles south of Mpanda, 35 miles north of Namanyere, c. 7° 07' S., 30° 58' E., alt. 4,600 ft., fl. 20 July 1958, Reynolds 8948 holotype (PRE), isotype (K, EA).

Our new species was discovered by Dr. N. R. Smuts and myself on a rocky outcrop surrounded by woodland, half a mile east of the road at a point 71 miles south of Mpanda, 9 miles north of Chisi, and 35 miles north of Namanyere in the Western Province of Tanganyika Territory, at 4,600 ft.

It is nearest allied to *A. macrosiphon* Bak. which I have seen in numbers in the Kagera Valley near the boundary between Tanganyika Territory and Uganda, also west and south of Lake Victoria. Both *A. macrosiphon* and *A. venusta* have leaves copiously spotted on both surfaces, a more or less 10-branched inflorescence 1—1.20 met. high, racemes 15—20 cm. long, and cylindric-trigonous perianths 32 mm. long.

A. venusta differs in having leaves that are not glossy, leaf margins with a rather pronounced continuous pink cartilaginous edge, racemes

with the apical buds denser and hidden by large fleshy imbricate bracts, slightly longer pedicels, and perianths that are pale scarlet and minutely pubescent.

In *A. venusta* the leaves are arcuate-ascending, with the apices incurved and grouped rather closely together. The lower surface of leaves is thus more exposed to the sun than the upper.

In all inflorescences seen, the peduncle was erectly ascending until above the leaf apices, then curved somewhat suberectly with the upper portion again ascending.

A. macrosiphon grows almost invariably in shady thickets on termite mounds in bush or woodland, with the inflorescence usually entangled in bush, whereas *A. venusta* was found only in scanty soil on exposed rocks surrounded by *Brachystegia-Isobertia* woodland. Plants occur singly or in small groups and in an area infested with tsetse flies.

DESCRIPTION: *Plants* acaulous, solitary or in small groups.

Leaves about 20, densely rosulate, compactly arcuate-ascending, about 50 cm. long, 9 cm. broad at base, gradually narrowing to an incurved apex with the apices rather closely grouped together: *upper surface* flat low down, somewhat canaliculate upwards, dull grey-green, copiously spotted throughout, the spots elliptical, pale green, more crowded low down, more scattered upwards; *lower surface* rounded, reddish brown where exposed to the sun, copiously spotted throughout, the spots smaller, more numerous and more crowded than in the upper surface; *margins* sinuate-dentate, with distinct continuous pinkish edge armed with teeth of the same colour, the teeth deltoid, forward-uncinate, 3 mm. long, 8—10 mm. apart at middle of leaf, smaller and more crowded low down, longer and more distant upwards.

Inflorescence a many-branched panicle 1—1.20 met. tall.

Peduncle basally flattened and 15 mm. broad, terete upwards, about 10-branched from the middle upwards, the bracts subtending lowest branches thin white papery brittle, 40 mm. long, 30 mm. broad, many-nerved.

Racemes rather densely flowered, cylindric-conical, up to 15—20 cm. long, erect or suberect, the buds denser and hidden by thick fleshy densely imbricate bracts, the open flowers laxer and nutant.

Bracts broadly ovate-cuspidate, somewhat fleshy in the middle and thinner at the edges, about 11 mm. long, 10 mm. broad, 7—9-nerved.

Pedicels 13 mm. long (up to 20 mm. in the fruit).

Perianth pale scarlet, minutely pubescent, cylindric-trigonus, 32 mm. long, cylindric and 7 mm. diam. across the ovary, slightly narrowed on underside above the ovary, thence trigonus and slightly enlarging to an open mouth; *outer segments* free for 12 mm., thinner and paler at the



PLATE XX. *Aloe venusta* Reynolds.

Plant in natural habitat 71 miles south of Mpanda, Western Province, Tanganyika Territory. Height 1·20 met. Flowers 1/1 from bud to fruit stage,

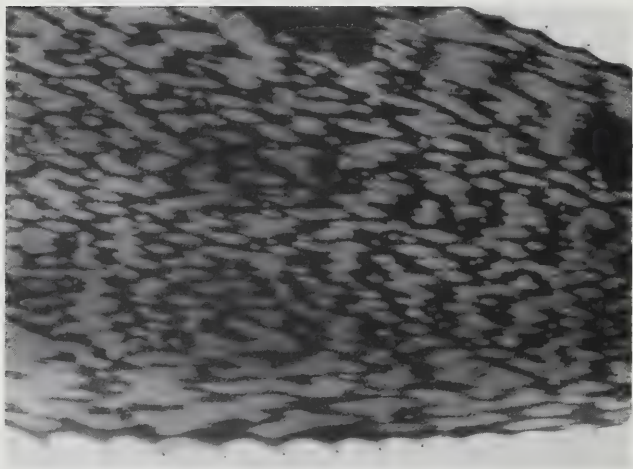
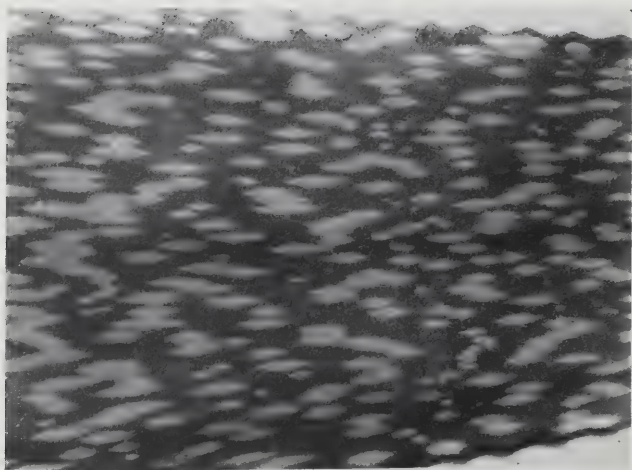


PLATE XXI. *A. venusta* Reynolds.
Upper: Portion of leaf upper surface 1/1.
Lower: Portion of leaf lower surface 1/1.

margins, the apices subacute and slightly spreading; *inner segments* broader than the outer, with broad pale marginal border and with three crowded nerves forming a slight keel, the apices more obtuse and more spreading than the outer.

Filaments pale lemon, the 3 inner narrower and lengthening before the 3 outer with their *anthers* in turn exerted 2—3 mm.

Stigma at length exerted 3—4 mm.

Ovary green, 6 mm. long, 3 mm. diam.

Capsule 20 mm. long, 12 mm. diam. at the middle.

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